

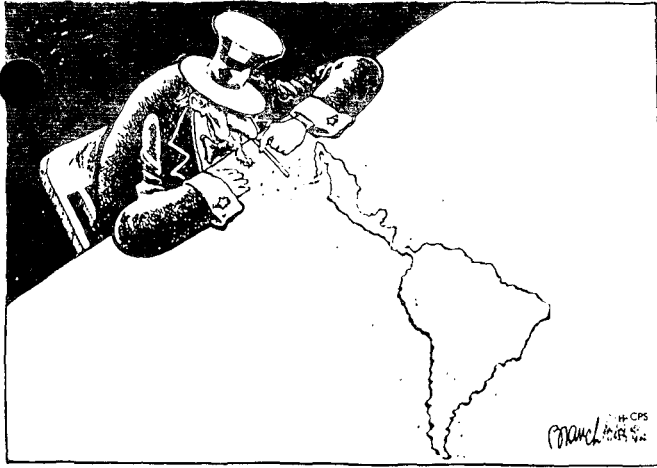
The Progressive Review

Nbr 272

July 1988



THE WAR ON DRUGS
Why it failed
&
What to do about it



much less a derisive one, will undoubtedly give the impression of antagonism. This will not ease the search for common ground and cooperation. It is subversive to movement-building...

"Antagonistic behavior is subversive on a pragmatic level, because it alienates opponents who might otherwise be won over. It is subversive on a philosophical level because it causes violence..."

"Ours is a politics of community, based on the principles of nonviolence. We start with the assumption of love, respect, and even awe, for the earth, for the natural order of the universe, and for the great beauty and potential of our own beingness. We each share our origins with one another and with all of creation. There can be no one who does not belong, regardless of opinion. There can be no enemy, regardless of behavior. Opponents are to be convinced of our truth, by the skills of intellect and the integrity of our caring for them. If we can not learn to love, work and struggle with one another, how can we expect to reach the rest of humanity?"

Birds in trouble

A leading ecologist has warned that a recent epidemic of deformed birds and a decline in certain types of birds may be a harbinger of ecological disaster. Paul R. Ehrlich of Stanford University, co-author of the *Birder's Handbook*, a natural history of North American birds, said recently, "Like the miners' canaries of old, birds still serve as an environmental early warning system." Among the signs he cited were a decline in warblers because of deforestation and mutations within other bird species. Ducks and loon populations have also declined where acid rain has destroyed their aquatic ecosystem.

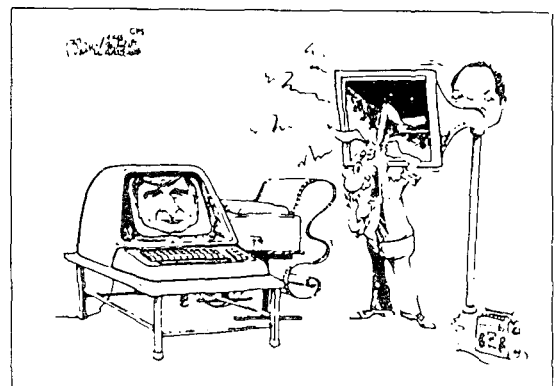
Said Ehrlich, "Birds are quite sensitive to poisons in the environment, and as a result an epidemic of deformed birds has recently hit the United States. It appears to be connected with high concentrations of selenium, mercury and other toxic elements in agricultural runoff and drainage from mines and power plants."

A progressive agenda?

The Democracy Project, a New York-based operation run by Mark Green, is coming up with a progressive agenda to present to Michael Dukakis should he become president. Says Green, "'Transition '89' is dedicated to avoiding victory without vision. In 1976 it was a political victory without a program" that resulted in Jimmy Carter lasting only one term. The project has already released a 140-page book called "Ideas that Work: 60 Solutions for America's Third Century." It will be followed by an agency-by-agency study by 48 experts, such as Stephen Cohen of Princeton University who is looking at the Dukakis foreign policy. Cohen says he is dismayed by Dukakis's commitment to building up conventional forces and has seen no sign that the presidential candidate is willing to seize the opportunity for dramatic change in US-Soviet relations.

Christic down, not out

The Christic Institute's sweeping civil suit that threatened to blow open the Iran-Contra scandal, and coincidentally bring out new facts about George Bush's involvement therein, has been thrown out of court in Florida. But Christic says it isn't giving up. It plans to appeal the decision. Christic notes that it had to go all the way to the Supreme Court in the Karen Silkwood case. It also says that if, as threatened, General Singlaub sues Christic and its officials, this will "allow us to bring evidence of his activities before the court to demonstrate what we have alleged in the Contragate lawsuit."



The Drug Problem

The failure of law enforcement

Laws ultimately require the consent of the governed. Vast numbers of Americans have voted with their dollars to dealers that they do not favor current drug laws. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse, Over one-third of the American population over 12 years has used some form of illegal drug. The figure for young adults is a staggering 60%. An estimated 22% of young adults are currently using pot.

The violation of drug laws -- unlike robbing a bank or stealing a car, is easily concealed. As indication of the magnitude of the problem, Washington DC made some 30,000 drug arrests during the first period of its Operation Clean Sweep. The use and sale of drugs continued to rise.

Attempting to prevent drugs from entering the country presents an insurmountable problem. Patrolling all American coastline and contiguous territorial waters -- excluding rivers, coves and so forth, means covering 60,000 square miles of ocean. Even the proposed addition of 160 Navy vessels would leave each of these ships with nearly 400 square miles to patrol. In May 1988, a Coast Guard official reported that even before that agency's budget cuts, it was running only six to 20 ships on patrol for the entire Florida and Georgia coastline. With the budget cuts the number of available ships was cut in half. And as was discovered during Prohibition, concentrating enforcement at main areas of activity merely results in a shifting of drug activity from these areas.

A similar effect can be seen in our cities where police target a certain neighborhood for drug control. One Washington drug dealer indicated that he approved of such measures because it assured him where the police would be.

The cost of drug interdiction programs are absurdly expensive. In 1987, according to a General Accounting Office report, the Air Force spent \$2.6 million on drug interdiction and ended up with six seizures and ten arrests, using its high-tech AWACS surveillance planes. It cost the Air Force about \$433,000 a bust. The Navy and Coast Guard spent \$40 million in 1987 to capture a total of 20 boats and make 110 arrests. This represents a cost of \$2 million per seizure.

In June 1988, FBI director Williams

Sessions said that his agency had identified about 250 South American drug cartels, more than 200 in Mexico and about 110 in Italy. The FBI has been able to investigate only about 44% of those in Latin America and ten percent of those in Europe. Said Sessions: "The rest have gone undealt with...simply because of resources."

Drug enforcement and crime

In 1986, DC led the nation in per capita drug arrests. It achieved this record by arresting 15 out of every thousand residents of the city. These numbers are boggling when you compared them to Milwaukee, a town of similar size and crime rate, which arrested only 3.2 drug suspects per 1000 residents in 1986. Washington's arrest rate was also over twice as great as that of San Francisco and San Diego, two other cities of similar size and crime.

Although DC, under Operation Clean Sweep, was arresting five times as many people on drug charges as it was in 1977, the crime rate remained about the same. This despite a ten percent decline in the DC population, a decline concentrated in the younger crime-prone years.

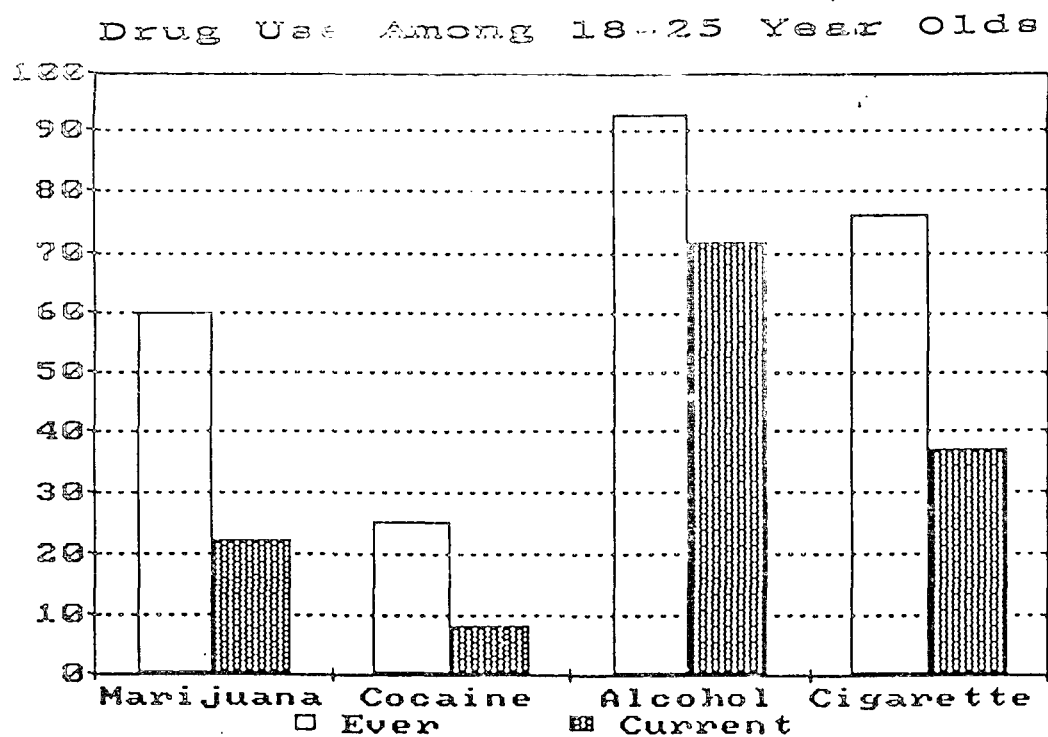
Enforcement and drugs

Between 1983 and 1986, drug arrests in DC went up over 50%, but drug overdose deaths in the city rose by 108%. Drug related emergency room reports also rose faster than drug arrests.

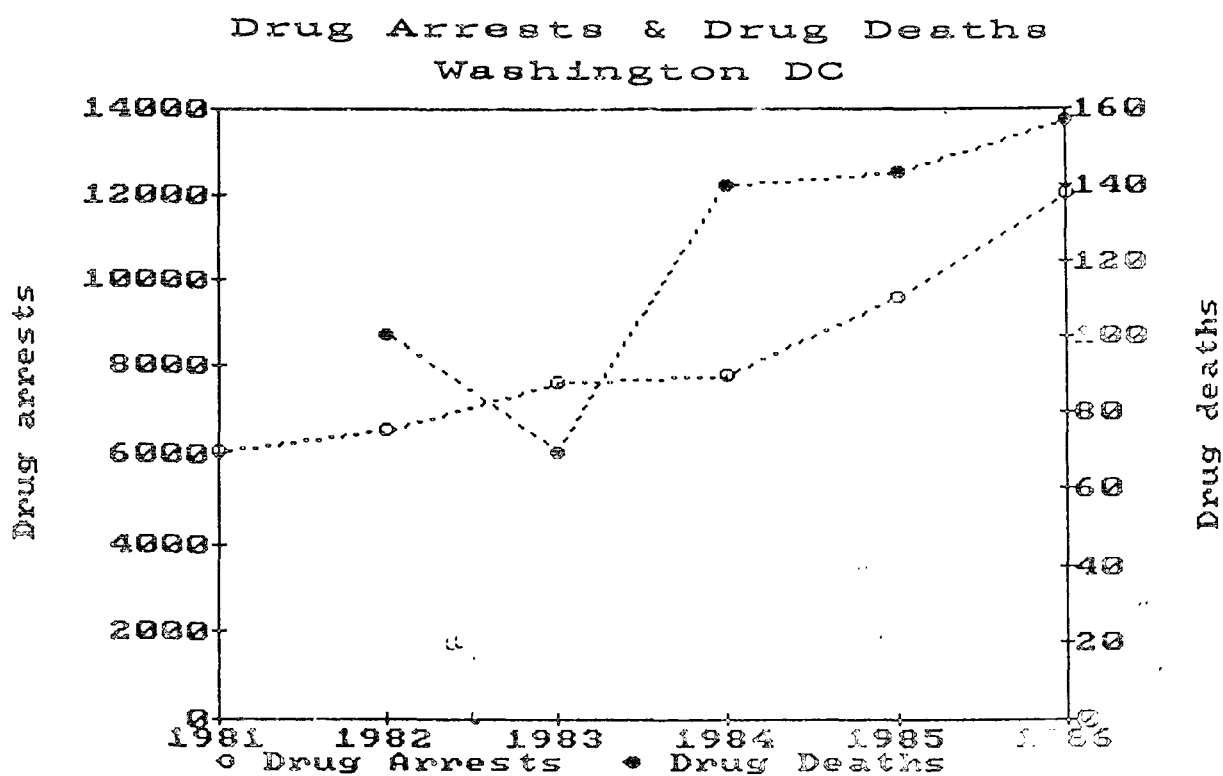
Further, in 1984, 55% of all adult arrestees in DC were found to be using one or more drugs. Despite vastly increased enforcement, by June 1987 this figure had risen to 73%. The percentage on cocaine went up from 14% to 58%.

Not all drugs are the same

In an experiment one group of rats was given unlimited heroin for a month; another group was given unlimited cocaine. All the rats in the first group ended up addicted but otherwise healthy. Many of the rats in the second group were, at the end of the month, dead. Both police and politicians make too little distinction between the various types of drugs. As a result, for example, the DC police arrested 3000 people in 1986 on marijuana charges (mostly for possession), taking a huge bite out of enforcement money and time for one of the



Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse



Source: DC Government

least harmful drugs.

Alternatives to enforcement

The decline in smoking in America shows that a society can successfully attack an addiction epidemic without law enforcement. Law enforcement in the anti-smoking effort -- such as banning smoking in public places, has come late in the drive to reduce smoking and reflects the success of the campaign more than being a cause of that success.

Before the current drug hysteria, during the last half of the seventies, we were making progress with the problem of that time. During the Carter administration, heroin deaths in major cities dropped from 1700 to under 500 a year. With the subsequent decline of treatment funding, however, these deaths had risen to 1200 by 1985. There is simply no doubt but that heroin, which remains a major drug of choice despite popular impression to the contrary, can be dealt with effectively by treatment and maintenance programs. Arnold Trebach, professor at the American University School of Justice, and author of *The War on Us, The Story of the American Anti-Drug Crusade and Its Victims*, said in 1986:

"What makes heroin a good maintenance drug is that it is not an organically destructive drug. While it is addicting, it does not hurt your body like tobacco or alcohol does...I think we have to realize that as bad as heroin is, and I think it is a terribly addicting substance, you can use it if you have it under control...The horrible thing would be that you need it, that you were addicted. But unlike an alcohol drinker or tobacco smoker, you won't at an advanced age find yourself dying of an organic illness."

What the terms mean

They mean different things to different people and it is important to keep these differences straight. At one end of the spectrum are those who endorse complete legalization with sales permitted much in the fashion that liquor is now sold. Others would require that drugs be dispensed by a physician or at a hospital. Claude Brown, the author of *Manchild in the Promised Land* (who himself was once a drug dealer), favors this approach noting that making the connection between drug use and illness would have a strong effect on the young.

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Others favor decriminalization of all or some drugs. This generally means that drug offenses would be handled as a civil violation like a parking ticket, perhaps requiring attendance at anti-drug programs as well as a fine. In other cases, such as in Holland, decriminalization means that laws remain on the books but are not enforced except in cases tying drug distribution to organized crime and so forth.

There is further disagreement as to which drugs should be legalized or decriminalized.

A still further and important distinction is between selling or merely using a drug. Some people favor legalizing use but not the sale of drugs.

But drugs kill

The existence of a problem doesn't necessarily mean the government can solve it. In the case of drugs, it can make matters worse. For example, a marginally effective war on drugs (say reducing the flow by 10-20%) has the main effect of increasing the price of drugs, which in turn increases crimes used to fund the drug habit. Further, it increases the competition amongst dealers as the stakes become higher. For example, it is estimated that 250 people in DC will die of drug overdoses in 1988. But if drug-related killings continue at their present rate over 300 people will be murdered over drugs.

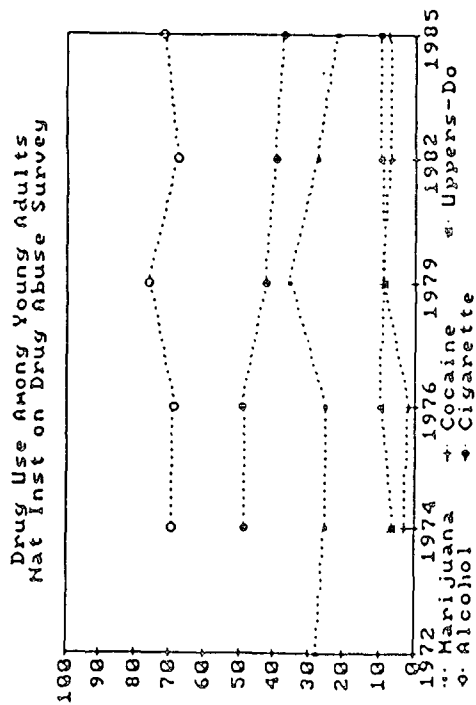
The assumption that decriminalization will increase general consumption of drugs is not supported by the facts. For example, in Holland, where marijuana is decriminalized (and sold in coffee shops and even at youth centers), pot use by teen agers is estimated at less than 1% of their population. The figure in the US is just over 5%.

Further, our over-emphasis on enforcement is killing people by siphoning away funds that could be used for treatment. In June 1988 there was a waiting list of a thousand people for Washington DC's woefully inadequate drug treatment programs, and there had been at least two suicides as a result of being turned away from clinics.

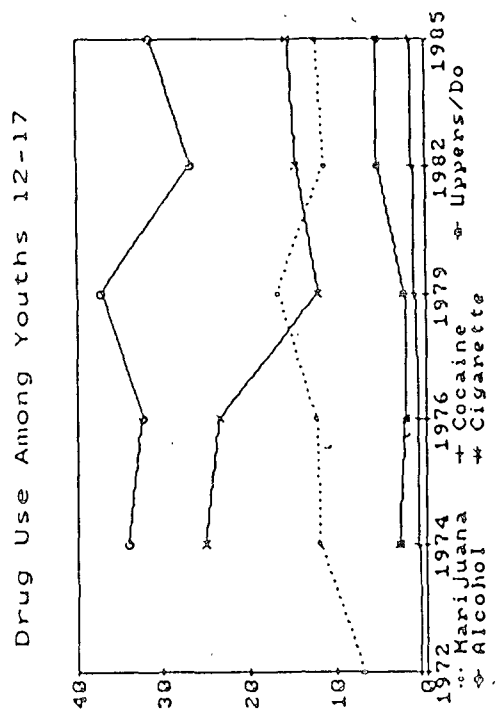
The drug-AIDS connection

Still another way our distorted priorities are killing people is the refusal of politicians and law enforcement officials to recognize the role of dirty needles in the spread of AIDS. Pleas for a needle swap program in New York City from public health officials went unheeded. In the spring of 1988, for

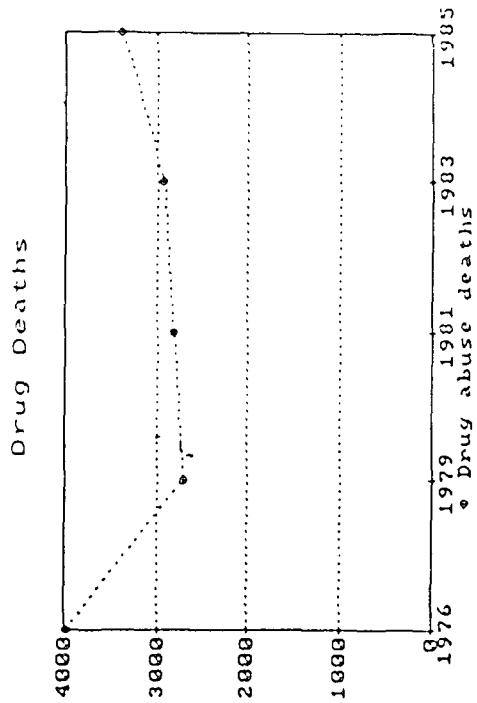
This chart shows the results of a National Institute on Drug Abuse survey on drug use in the US by young adults (18-25). Note the decline in cigarette smoking which is completely legal and the drop in marijuana use which, while illegal, is treated less seriously than other drugs.



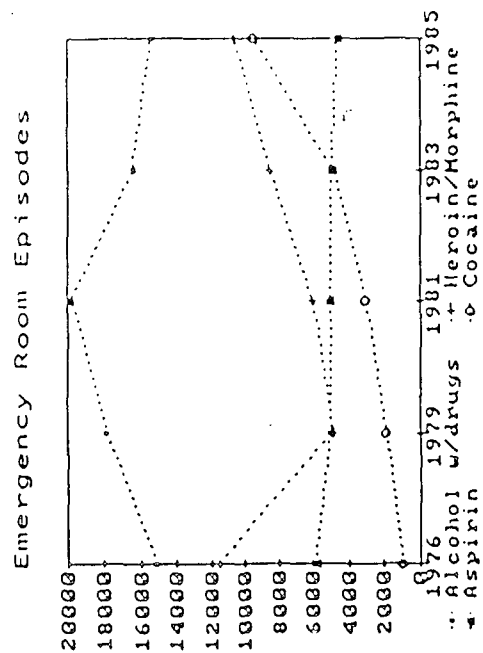
This chart shows the results of a National Institute on Drug Abuse survey on drug use in the US by youths aged 12-17. Note the dramatic drop in cigarette smoking since the seventies.



This chart shows the dramatic drop in drug deaths in 27 major metropolitan areas during the 1970s before national policy shifted away from treatment and maintenance towards law enforcement.



This chart shows the number of emergency room episodes for various drugs in 27 major metropolitan areas.



Source: National Institute on Drug Abuse

Weather Report

The southern mystique

Molly Ivins, writing in *Mother Jones*, notes that what most political pundits know about the south could "fit on the tip of a ball point." Take, for example those 'pivotal voters,' white southern males. They are "so conservative they voted for Franklin Roosevelt, so isolationist they voted for Richard Nixon, so populist they voted for Barry Goldwater, so aristocratic they voted for George Wallace." To acknowledge your southernness, says Ivins, is "to accept that simple, elementary common sense is never going to rule your life, or even play much of a role."

Heavy metal

Metal pollution of land, sea and water now exceeds that of radioactive and organic wastes combined, says a study published in *Nature*, a British scientific weekly. Highly toxic metals such as cadmium, arsenic and mercury are contaminating water and the human food chain, write Jerome Nriagu of the National Water Institute of Canada and Josef Pacynna of the Norwegian Institute of Air Pollution Research.

Poor stats on the environment

Paul Portney, in the *Lancaster Independent Press*, has issued a call for the creation of a bureau of environmental statistics, modeled on the Bureau of Labor Statistics and the Bureau of Economic Analysis. As just one example of the need, Portney notes: "For instance, such data as do exist on airborne concentrations of lead come from a 'network' of only 53 monitoring stations intended to represent the whole country. Similarly, despite cries that ambient ozone levels be reduced, in part to alleviate

agricultural crop losses, virtually no monitoring is carried out for rural areas... And as for the national program that monitors all the toxic air pollutants causing widespread concern? It doesn't exist."

The situation is even bleaker for water quality and pesticide measurements and for studies of numerous other ecosystems.

Green notes

The first Florida Green conference was held a couple of months ago, and in the announcement, Bob Brister summed up the Green philosophy in a succinct fashion:

"The Green movement is a coming-together of the feminist, peace, social justice and ecological movements that grew during the 60s and the 70s. What is unique about the Green movement is its holistic world view. The Green movement recognizes the deep interconnection of all life and social processes, and, thus neither social nor ecological problems can be solved in isolation from each other. The Green perspective does not try to reduce the many struggles against oppression to a single 'key' struggle based on class, sex, race or whatever. The Green movement instead recognizes the interconnections between different forms of domination. The Greens seek to bring all of these movements together on a basis of equality to develop a common framework and shared perspective that can form a broad popular movement against the multiple forms of domination and for the creation of new decentralized forms of self-government and ecological modes of development."

How different Green politics can be can be seen from these excerpts from a piece by David Perry in a recent issue of *Synthesis*:

"All of us are used to seeing differences take on divisive and alienating functions. All of us are accustomed to functioning in adversarial environments. We Greens are doing something quite different. Green politics embraces differences and considers them a measure of richness and strength. We are learning to process disagreement with dignity and humanity. This requires honesty as well as gentleness. Snide comments behind someone's back can be far more destructive than a strident tone of voice. So can the avoidance of conflict. "Debate is necessary, and anger is a natural emotion. But we must deal with feelings in a responsible manner. When we are angry we must be especially careful not to sink into destructive behavior. A constructive attitude will contribute honesty and directness. To address one's compatriots in a strident tone,

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the first time, reported cases of AIDS among intravenous drug users surpassed those reported among homosexuals in that city. Said one public health official: "We have been saying for over a year that the trend is changing. We have been saying that you'd see that tomorrow. Well, today is tomorrow." New York still doesn't have a needle swap program. This could, in this one city alone, result in thousands of deaths by the early 1990s.

A June 1988 of the Institute of Medicine of the National Academy of Sciences said:

"The committee believes that the gross inadequacy of federal efforts to reduce transmission among IV drug abusers, when considered in relation to the scope and implications of such transmission, is now the most serious deficiency in current efforts to control (AIDS) infection in the United States."

Does treatment work?

There are serious problems, especially with some of the more recently popular drugs such as cocaine, crack and PCP. But drugs that we know respond to treatment or maintenance programs are responsible for almost two-thirds of overdose deaths in Washington at this time.

The National Academy of Sciences report cited above also said:

"The waiting lists for entry into treatment programs are a clear indication that the caliber of the ammunition in the war on drugs needs to be increased. The committee urges a greater commitment on the part of federal, state, and local governments to the rapid, large-scale expansion of drug-abuse treatmentslots, both in residential drug-free treatment centers and in methadone maintenance facilities, to offer immediate access to all addicts who request treatment."

Towards a sensible drug policy

The real turning point in the Vietnam war may well have occurred when Paul Harvey's son reached draft age. About that time, Harvey, the arch-conservative broadcaster who was perhaps the most listened to person in America, decided we couldn't win and should get out. It finally became acceptable for even proponents of that grisly adventure to admit it was time to come home.

Something similar seems to be happening today with our domestic Vietnam: the misbegotten war on drugs, complete in metaphor with its high-tech weaponry producing death without victory, its poisoning of the land, its pacification programs, and a hubris on the part of the politicians that seems to mount with each failure.

Our leaders have offered the same response to each defeat: doing more of the same, only harder and at greater cost. And they promise the same light at the end of the tunnel.

The almost hallucinogenic unreality of this, however, may be nearing an end. Those columnar curators of the conventional, William Buckley and Richard Cohen, have sent out trial balloons on behalf of drug legalization and have not been pilloried for it. But most astoundingly, Kurt Schmoke, a former prosecutor now the mayor of Baltimore, has called for a national discussion of narcotics legalization.

We have paid an enormous price for our futile war on drugs beyond the cost of crime and of incarcerating its participants. We have hamstrung public health officials who can not effectively reach the addicted population as long as the justice system writes all the rules. People have died because police and prosecutors won't even accept the US surgeon general's word that exchanging clean needles for dirty ones would help in reducing AIDS. We have accepted unprecedented intrusions on our privacy and individual rights as a necessary cost of winning the war. And we have diverted funds from housing, health care and education, where the money could be spent usefully, to creating pointless, ineffective symbols of our concern that, in reality, make matters worse. We have in the end chosen to fund our moral indignation rather than produce moral results.

There are things we could do right now to extricate ourselves from the problems the war on drugs have created. We could decriminalize the personal use of drugs, we could establish badly needed sterile needle exchange programs, we could spend at least as much on treatment and rehabilitation as we do on enforcement. We could begin treating drugs as the public health problem they are.

In the Vietnam era, the argument changed from the moral question of why we were there to the pragmatic question of whether, right or wrong, the American presence could accomplish anything. In the end, Henry Kissinger and Abbie Hoffman arrived at the same place and we got out. We are on the cusp of such a change in our war on drugs, like Vietnam, many futile deaths too late. So, as Kurt Schmoke says, we might as well start talking about how we end what we can't win. Will the last cop out of Mayfair please turn off the lights?

The other face of Mt. Rushmore

Thomas S. Martin

The Sioux Nation's hundred-year battle to reclaim the Black Hills is in the news again. In 1980 the Supreme Court awarded the Sioux (or Lakota, as they prefer to be called) \$191 million in reparations for the loss of their sacred lands, guaranteed to them by the 1868 Red Cloud War treaty but stolen thirty years later. The Lakota refused the award; they would rather have the Black Hills. Now the new paramount chief, Philip J. Stevens, is asking for the cession of a large segment of the Hills, plus \$3.1 billion in damages. Senator Bill Bradley has offered an alternative plan: the original \$191 million, and the unimproved areas of the Hills owned by the federal government. Bradley's plan would exempt Ellsworth Air Force Base, all real estate in private hands, and the Mount Rushmore National Monument. Neither Stevens nor anyone else has suggested handing Mount Rushmore over to the Lakota. Yet this man-made monstrosity is probably the most blatant symbol of Indian oppression ever created.

Doane Robinson, South Dakota's State Historian, dreamed up the idea of a massive sculpture in the Black Hills nearly seventy years ago. Ironically, his first suggestion was an image of the ill-fated Red Cloud. Years of fundraising, congressional lobbying and wire-pulling brought the project to fruition. By 1925 the appropriate mountainside had been selected, a sculptor had been hired, and Red Cloud had become George Washington. (The other three presidents were an afterthought.) Many South Dakotans objected until they realized that the project would create jobs, promote tourism and bring in lots of federal money. Environmentalists raised a hue and cry -- they did not want to see the mountain "disfigured," but no voices were raised on behalf of the Sioux Nation, whose sacred hills were being trashed. President Calvin Coolidge visited the area in the summer of 1927, and complimented sculptor Gutzon Borglum on his achievement. A delegation of Sioux, led by Chief Chauncy Yellow Robe, called on the president, gave him a feathered headdress and named him *Wanbli Tokaha* ("Leading Eagle"). Modern history books often reprint the photograph of Coolidge, looking embarrassed in his feathery splendor. Today the Lakota claim that Chauncy Yellow Robe was not authorized to 'adopt' Coolidge into the tribe, and did not represent the Nation.

The Mount Rushmore monument took more than fifteen years to complete; now more than two million visitors a year come to gape at it. A greater waste of time and money, or a greater insult to the Lakota Nation, would be hard to imagine. The four men depicted so colossally were not exactly friends of the red man.

George Washington's attitude toward the Indians was forged by his experience in the French and Indian War. As a commanding officer in the Ohio country he treated his Iroquois allies like slaves, and showed no mercy to his Delaware enemies. As president he hoped to integrate the "poor wretches" into the dominant white culture. If they could be persuaded to give up hunting and gathering, he reasoned, they might become productive and peaceful

farmers. And, incidentally, their vast underutilized lands could be opened to white settlement. Washington's biographer James Thomas Flexner thinks this "may well have been the most impractical idea that Washington ever espoused." Incidentally, the Iroquois called our first president "Destroyer of Towns," and the epithet has become their generic term for all subsequent chief executives.

Thomas Jefferson was fascinated by Indian culture and languages, and did more than most presidents to protect the tribes, but he viewed them more as lab specimens than as human beings of dignity and worth. After the United States acquired the Louisiana Territory, he considered various schemes to deprive the trans-Mississippi natives of their land. He hoped that the tribes would become dependent on white trade goods, which would drive them deeply into debts that could be repaid only by land cessions. "In this way," he wrote to William Henry Harrison, "our settlements will gradually circumscribe and approach the Indians, and they will in time either incorporate with us as citizens of the U.S." or move elsewhere.

As a young man Abraham Lincoln fought in the Black Hawk War, a blatant attempt to exterminate a band of Sauk and Fox Indians who had had the temerity to recross the Mississippi and found a settlement in Illinois. During the Civil War President Lincoln considered using Confederate prisoners to fight the Apache and Sioux in the farther west.

"During the past century," wrote Theodore Roosevelt in 1885, "a good deal of sentimental nonsense has been talked about our taking the Indians' land." To be sure, wrongs had been done, but "where brutal and reckless frontiersmen are brought into contact with a set of treacherous, vengeful, and fiendishly cruel savages a long series of outrages by both sides is sure to follow." Still, the nomadic Indians "never had any real ownership" in their lands, and it was no crime to seize them and put them to better use.

If the Black Hills or any part of them ever go back to Lakota ownership, surely Mount Rushmore ought to be part of the package. Perhaps the Indians, to whom these hills are holy ground, can put the monument to some better use.

Thomas Martin teaches history at Antioch College. He is the author of Minds and Hearts: The American Revolution as a Philosophical Crisis (1984).

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It is not uncommon for the government to spend \$1,200 or more in administration costs in order to hand out \$500 in welfare payments. Instead of this wasteful, unjust system, why not make all US citizens over the age of 18 equal shareholders in the US Government. By abolishing forever all the wasteful unneeded programs we can simply divide 55% of the current budget among voters with the aid of a small staff and several computers. The whole operation could be conducted in one building! This *National Dividend Plan* could provide a first year income of \$300 per month to all shareholders.

Agencies with lofty, humanitarian titles are in actuality machines of waste, corruption and fraud. Suppose your neighbor's house burned down and someone knocked on your door to pass the hat and raise some emergency cash for the poor soul. Then later you discovered that this good citizen in fact pocketed \$700 out of the \$1,000 he raised and only gave the homeless neighbor \$300! Wouldn't you be angry? But that is how *all* governments work.

If 90% of American households receive some form of government aid, and if it costs three times as much to have that aid *individualized* than it does just to hand it out blindly, then why not just divide all aid equally and automatically to everyone? For the price of helping one person you can now help three people or more!

With the introduction of the National Dividend Plan we would be dividing each year a fixed percentage of the Gross National Product. As industrial output and profits increase, our NDP checks will also increase. By reducing red tape waste and

production of worthless government items, more money will automatically flow into usable consumer goods such as cars, homes, food. And as NDP checks would be taxable income, \$50 billion or more would return to the government in the form of income tax.

Now let's talk about the big bugabo, Social Security. My father who worked hard his entire life, only received \$500 per month from Social Security the last year of his 80-year life. Let's be generous and say he got that amount every month from age 65 to 80. That comes to a total of only \$90,000. If we started the NDP today, an 18 year old who put all his checks in a "no-brainer" investment like a bank account, would have at age 65 well over \$402,000 after taxes. If he lived to be 80 as my father, he would on top of that receive \$300 per month for 15 years or another \$54,000.

As we can see from these figures it is very expensive and wasteful to have the Federal Government try and play our mommy and daddy and take care of all our needs individually. Statistical analysis and common sense prove it is far better to have the government act as a silent rich uncle who just mails you cash without being involved in or controlling our life. We need a grass roots movement to demand a change to a sane government. We certainly can work out a gradual switchover period to make the changes as smooth and humane as possible. The hordes of government workers will have to go out and find real jobs that actually produce something. There will be hardship for some, but immediate benefits for many more. But as a operation to remove a tumor is certainly no fun, we cannot save the life of our economy without some pain. The NDP would be the best possible gift we could leave for our children and our children's children. At last, a sane government based on scientific principles, not politics!

*Christopher Calder
Willits, CA 95490*

Field notes

Co-Op America has issued another edition of its mail order catalog. This issue features some 300 products from cooperative and socially conscious businesses, with an emphasis on items for the home. Among the products offered at a reusable coffee filter, a non-toxic household cleaner, a water-saving showerhead, and solar battery chargers. Catalog is \$1 from Co-op America, 2100 M St nw, #310, DC 20063.

Garbage: Two new publications from Inform deal with the garbage problem. The first, *Garbage: Practices, Problems and Remedies*, discusses the basic facts of garbage creation and handling and suggests waste management alternatives. \$3.50. *Garbage Management in Japan* tells of that country's success at recycling up to 50% of the waste stream compared to the US where only about 8% is recycled. The Japanese have also learned how to produce cleaner air emissions from their waste-to-energy plants, prevent groundwater contamination from landfills, separate toxic substances from the waste stream and keep extraordinarily precise data on municipal solid waste generation, recycling, and incineration. \$15 from Inform, 381 Park Avenue South, NYC 10

Bioregional Congress: The third North American Bioregional Congress will be held on the Cheakamus River in the Squamish watershed about 40 miles north of Vancouver. About 300 participants are expected at the event Aug 21-26, which will include displays of art and culture as well as discussions of bioregionalism. Info: NABC III Office, Bioregional Project, HCR 3, Box 3, Brixey Mo 65618.

Reach the Review by computer: Our masthead on page 2 now includes the information you need to reach us either through Compuserve or Peacenet. You can use either electronic mail, the Peacenet conference 'pn.dc' or the Compuserve national bulletin board using the keyword 'Progressive.' If you have been looking for a progressively-oriented computer network, Peacenet may be your answer, with its scores of conferences on various activist topics. Many national progressive groups also use Peacenet for news and announcements. Info: 415-923-0900.



Weather Report

What herbicide the State Department wants to spray on South American crops as part of the drug war has been scored by an internal department report that says that tibuthiron, or 'Spike,' could poison farmland for up to three years, kill small birds and endangered plants, and cause violent reactions in humans.

Is there a constitutional duty to care for the poor? In a well-argued paper in the *Hastings Law Review* (University of California November 1987) Peter Edelman says that there is, based on theories of due process and equal protection. Those looking for a new approach to the poverty problem should have a look at this piece.

A major struggle over what amounts to an attempt by the Reagan administration to impose an official secrets act is continuing with little attention being paid by the nation's press. Hundreds of thousands of federal workers have already signed an extraordinary pledge of secrecy that extends even to keeping the US Congress in the dark. A handful of rebels, led by Air Force whistle-blower Ernie Fitzgerald, have refused to sign the document, which could be used to conceal myriad mischief within the executive branch. Last month, US District Court Judge Oliver Gasch handed down a frightening decision that, if upheld, would greatly weaken even the Congress's ability to get information from the executive. Ruling on a spending

resolution that barred workers temporarily from being forced to sign the pledge, Gasch claimed that the legislative act "intrudes dramatically upon presidential authority." Gasch said he found particularly offensive provisions that barred the president from preventing federal employees from communicating with Congress or interfering with the legislative branch's ability to get secret information from government employees. He also objected to the prohibition of any secrecy agreement that is at odds with existing law. Said Gasch: "read together, these provisions permit the president to ensure the secrecy of national security information only by those means authorized by Congress." The ruling, which is being appealed, could have the effect of giving the president carte blanche in secrecy matters, greatly weakening the Congress and granting enormous new arbitrary power to an already excessively strong White House.

With all the hot dogs and hobnobbing, it sometimes looked like play. But make no mistake: Washington worked this weekend. The rest of the country may have taken a couple of days off, but Washingtonians went about their business -- raising money for victims of disease, talking about ways to solve international conflicts, hosting leaders in the arts -- and politicking, of course. And they proved once again that in this city, there's always one sure way to get things done: Throw a party... --*Washington Post*

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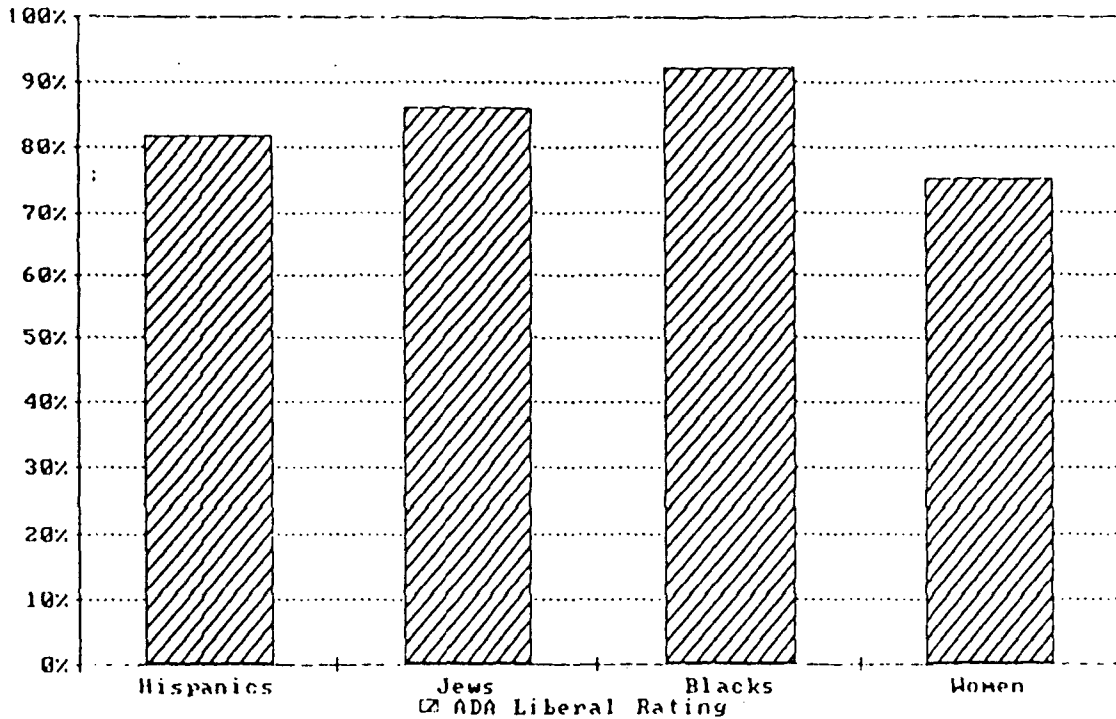
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The Quiet Coalition

(House Democrats Only)



Although Jesse Jackson's campaign has led to much media attention to divisions between blacks and Jews, the chart above tells a different story. Shown are the latest ADA ratings for House Democrats who belong to various minorities. The liberal rating of House blacks is 92%, the rating for House Jews is 86%. Jewish Democrats in the Senate have an average rating of 92%.



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